Jan LEONTSKY

The Host of Colophon

for

Narrator,

Oboe, Western Concert Flute

Trumpet, Harp & Tambourin.

Text from Xenophanes of Colophon (6th century BC.)

English Translation by Arthur Fairbanks



THE NARRATOR (slowly and solemnly)

In the beginning the gods did not at all reveal all things clearly to mortals, but by searching men in the course of time find them out better.

Musicians play Hymn I - Dactyl

THE NARRATOR

The following are fit topics for conversation for men reclining on a soft couch by the fire in the winter season, when after a meal they are drinking sweet wine and eating a little pulse: Who are you, and what is your family? What is your acre, my friend? How old were you when the Medes * invaded this land?

Musicians play Hymn II - Iambic

THE NARRATOR

For now the floor is clean, the hands of all and the cups are clean; one puts on the woven garlands, another passes around the fragrant ointment in a vase the mixing bowl stands full of good cheer, and more wine, mild and of delicate bouquet, is at hand in jars, which says it will never fail.

Musicians play Hymn III - Trochee

THE NARRATOR

In the midst frankincense sends forth its sacred fragrance, and there is water, cold, and sweet, and pure; the yellow loaves are near at hand, and the table of honour is loaded with cheese and rich honey. The altar in the midst is thickly covered with flowers on every side; singing and mirth fill the house.

Musicians play Hymn IV – Tribachys

THE NARRATOR

Men making merry should first hymn the god with propitious stanzas and pure words; and when they have poured out libations and prayed for power to do the right (since this lies nearest at hand), then it is no unfitting thing to drink as much as will not prevent your walking home without a slave, if you are not very old.

Musicians play Hymn V – Anapest

THE NARRATOR

And one ought to praise that man who, when he has drunk, unfolds noble things as his memory and his toil for virtue suggest; but there is nothing praiseworthy in discussing battles of Titans or of Giants or Centaurs, fictions of former ages, nor in plotting violent revolutions. But it is good always to pay careful respect to the gods.

Musicians play Hymn VI - Spondee

Hymn I - Dactyl

Tempo always calm and serene

Jan LEONTSKY Text by XENOPHANE

























































